

13 Caisson Crossing, Savannah, GA 31411-1302

Attorney General John Ashcroft  
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

January 16, 2002

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

Let me first say how absolutely delighted I am that you hold the critical office of Attorney General!

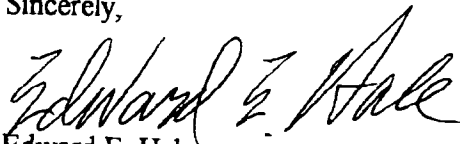
As a retired businessman who spent most of his career either directly or indirectly involved in "the computer business", I am writing to voice my thoughts on the settlement between Microsoft and the Justice Department. I think the settlement is a good one and should be accepted by the government.

During most of my career, IBM was "the big bad wolf" and during which time, there was a constant "hue and cry" to break up IBM and otherwise to hobble its operations under the guise of increasing competitiveness within the computer industry. And, I might add that IBM's position of dominance of the computer industry was much more pervasive than is Microsoft's in today's world.

The point of bringing up IBM is to make the point that, in the end, it was market forces (including the success of Microsoft) that brought them from complete dominance to where they are today. And I might further add that, in my opinion, the potential threats to Microsoft's position are more far-reaching and numerous than those IBM faced during its period of dominance.

It seems to me that in agreeing to license its Windows operating systems and protocols included in those systems, (decisions that must have been very hard to make!) Microsoft has taken steps that are fair and reasonable. I urge you to accept this settlement and stop Justice Department prosecution of Microsoft for the reasons stated above.

Sincerely,

  
Edward E. Hale